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DECORATION & FURNITURE

FURNITURE VIEWED BY ELECTRICITY.



THE experiments with the electric light in London have given opportunity for a novel and interesting form of exhibition to several prominent firms of house-decorators, who, co-operating with the Royal School of Art Needlework, have made a charming display of their respective wares at the Crystal Palace. The idea was to test the practicability of the electric light for the ordinary requirements of a dwelling and its inhabitants, and for this purpose the Victoria Cross Gallery was covered in, and sumptuously fitted up to reproduce the rooms of a modern home, all lighted by the various patterns of lamps and burners, lanterns and brackets proposed by the different inventors. A Jacobean hall sitting-room was decorated by a splendid frieze of embossed leather, and draped by rich embroideries from the Kensington School, among them a curtain designed by Burne Jones and a wall panel after a sketch from Walter Crane. In this room the furniture is of solid carved wood, and the electric light is introduced in brackets at the sides, with the exception of a single pendent lantern of pale green glass.

From this hall the visitor passes into a luxurious smoking-room, where three hanging lamps in colored glass combine with two Japanese bronze storks holding lights, to illuminate the page of a reader lounging upon divans and couches of deep-hued Oriental stuffs.

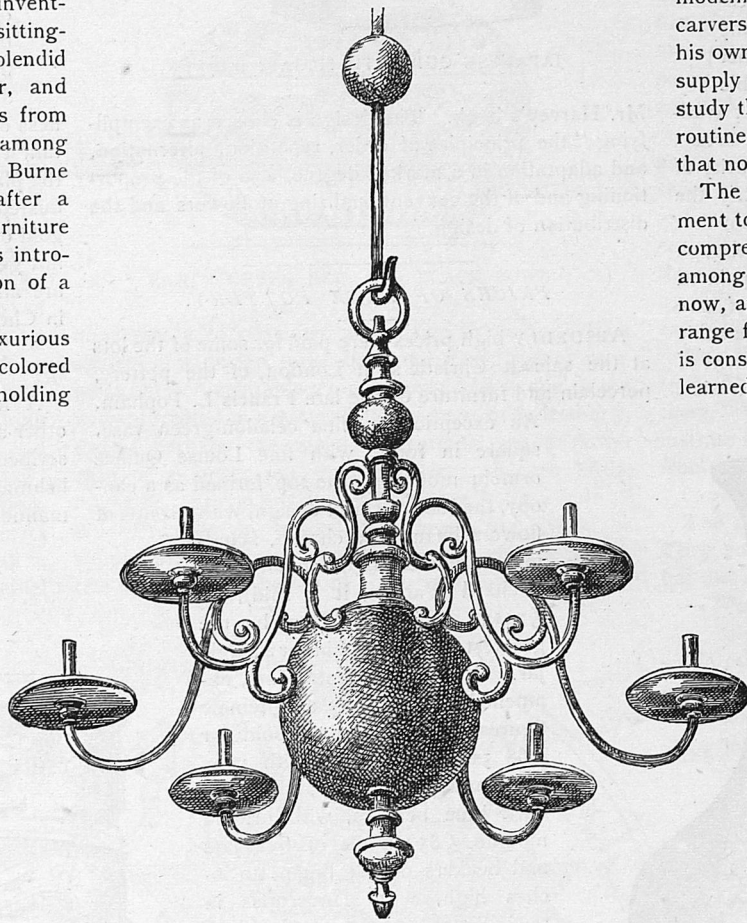
The dining-room, fitted up in the Adam style, was inspected with much curiosity not only by housekeepers but by diners-out of the gentler sex, who have been hearing, not unmoved, various prophecies as to the unbecoming quality of the new light. They were agreeably disappointed in the soft radiance streaming from opal or colored glass globes fixed upon bracket lamps on the walls, lamps upon the sideboard, and others placed on pedestals of carved mahogany in the corners of the room. There was no chandelier in this room, whence good taste has agreed to banish central lights in favor of those stationed at the side; consequently there were no trying cross-lights and shadows upon the faces of the guests.

In this beautiful room the furniture was of carved Spanish mahogany, finished with the delicate manipulation of the Adam school of workmen. The draperies, of gold-colored velvet, had borders embroidered with wheat-ears and Greek honeysuckles in gold and red. The same motive reappeared upon all the carving of the furniture, upon the door-frames, windows, and chimney-piece. The table was ready laid for guests with a fine damask cloth embroidered for the Princess Christian by the Royal School of Art Needlework, and bearing her monogram and coronet. In the centre of the cloth was an oblong mat of dark red plush, having the wheat-ear and honeysuckle border embroidered on it in paler reds with gold. Beneath the finger bowls were the most cobweb-like of dessert doilies, worked in conventional patterns of gold-colored silks upon sheer linen. The glassware, where specimens both cut and blown, crystal clear and jewel-hued, were displayed, made a brilliant effect in color on the cloth. The walls of this room were hung in dull Venetian-red silk.

In the drawing-room and boudoir there was a most

artistic blending of things both beautiful and curious. The drawing-room walls were of dull blue, warmed into cheerfulness by pinkish reds in the furniture; while the boudoir, divided from the larger room by a Moorish screen having an arched doorway, where hung a silver lamp, was hung in rose du Barri silk, with curtains of resedas green. Growing palms and ferns in jardinières and vases, books and writing materials, albums and photographs, sofa cushions and china ornaments were scattered about so liberally as to give all the impression that this charming spot needed but the presence of a presiding divinity to make of it a real home.

THE illustration herewith of one of those copper chandeliers of which the Dutch are especially fond is taken from Gerard Dou's famous picture of the "Woman with the Dropsy," in the Louvre. The simple beauty of the design should commend it to the consideration of some of our American makers of gas-fixtures for adaptation to modern needs. The chair in the style of Henry II. of France, also illustrated, is from an original so good that it has been deservedly copied



DUTCH CHANDELIER OF COPPER.
FROM ONE OF GERARD DOU'S PICTURES.

in this country as well as in Paris. The frame, it will be noticed, is covered with the same material as is used for upholstering the seat and back—a fashion which seems to have both advantages and disadvantages.

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM ART SCHOOLS.

ALTHOUGH the schools of the Metropolitan Museum of Art are in the third year of their existence, the present year, which they have signalized by moving into more commodious quarters, is the first in which they are able, as it were, to take account of themselves. The necessity of the schools and the propriety of their being undertaken by the museum have both been readily recognized. But it is somewhat surprising to find the organization still so incomplete. The classes at present are for instruction in drawing, designing, modelling and carving, carriage drafting and construction, fresco and ornament, besides a day class for women in tempera decoration. The course extends through seven months, each class meeting three evenings a week, ex-

cept that in modelling and carving, which meets five evenings a week; only two afternoons are given to the women's class. For such instruction the nominal sum of fifteen dollars is asked.

It will be seen that, with the exception of the one for women, the classes all meet in the evening, from which it may be inferred that the students are craftsmen employed otherwise during the day. The carriage class is under the charge of the National Carriage Builders' Association, and fifty-six men avail themselves of the instruction given. The object of the class is to supply carriage draughtsmen throughout the country. Constituted as it is, and attended as it is, the museum has evidently done good work in its share toward bringing it about. The class seems to be thoroughly established, and its method of instruction is immediately controlled by the Carriage Builders' Association. Its ends are definitely ascertained, but this does not seem to be the case with the other classes, in which the students appear to be pursuing their own ends in their own way. It is not certain, however, that this latitude is altogether unwise. The next most flourishing class, that in modelling, is attended chiefly by stone cutters and wood carvers. Each of these men, it is probable, knows best his own aims and his own deficiencies, and can aid and supply them better by a more individual course of study than by submitting to a general pre-established routine. The work in the modelling-room indicates that no regular course of instruction is dictated.

The free-hand drawing class offers great encouragement to the promoters of the school to put it on a more comprehensive basis, and enable it to take a stand among other great technical schools, which it does not now, and will not until better equipped. The students range from fourteen up to manhood, although fourteen is considered too young, as a boy of that age has not yet learned enough of his trade to understand wherein his studies will prove most serviceable. The members are for the most part engaged during the day as china decorators, silver-smiths, or cabinet workmen. Their studies include copying ornaments from the flat and drawing from casts, faces, and anatomical models. The attendance and the spirit of their work show much earnestness and appreciation of the means of advancement which the school is able to give them.

The fresco class is by no means so large, as the students must be thoroughly proficient in drawing before color is taken up. Some good work, however, is shown in neutral tints, although this department is hardly organized.

The women's class in tempera decoration appears the least fruitful. The attendance is small, which cannot be regretted when the instruction is directed as it is. The avowed object of the class is to teach the use of body color in industrial ornamentation. This is chiefly with a view to preparing working designs, for the other uses of body color named in the prospectus are scarcely worth considering, since ornamentation in color on leather is rarely demanded, and body colors on silk and satin will never be of sufficient moment to require a serious course of instruction such as these schools desire to furnish. The students also are to get some instruction in design. This is to be merely incidental and does not yet appear. Nor is there any evidence of training in the use of color other than the mechanical application of it to the surface. The work of the students is more crude in respect to design and the use of color schemes than one would expect to find it, in view of the general information which exists with regard to both. Several designs are shown in wall-paper, and in the conventionalizing of flowers for ornamental purposes which, neither in design nor in color, are in the direction of the best tendencies of ornamental art. For instance, a dado is shown whose reds, blues, and greens are thoroughly raw, while the design is heavy and com-